



US Army Corps
of Engineers®
Portland District

Celilo Village

Redevelopment Newsletter

August 2005

Redevelopment history _____

For millennia, the Celilo area has served as a trade center, sacred fishing ground and gathering place for the Northwest Indian tribes. Celilo Village currently supports 13 dwellings and about 50 people, but inadequate sanitary and water systems have caused public health and safety problems that concern federal, tribal, state and local health officials. To resolve these problems, the tribes formally requested the Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, to rebuild the village under the Columbia River Treaty Fishing Access Sites Project. Celilo Village Redevelopment was authorized by Pres. George W. Bush on March 2, 2004, as part of Public Law 108-204, and provides for the reconstruction of the village and associated structures and systems, repairs to the longhouse, and operation and maintenance of the rebuilt village. The Corps continues to work with the tribes, agencies, residents and other stakeholders to make redevelopment a reality. The Corps is scheduling and facilitating monthly meetings with the reconstituted Wyam Board.

Chief of Engineers attends Celilo Village longhouse ceremony

July 23 dawned clear and sunny on the newly completed longhouse at Celilo Village as more than 100 guests, including Lt. Gen. Carl Strock, the Corps' Chief of Engineers, gathered for a blessing ceremony near The Dalles, Ore. Residents of Celilo Village welcomed representatives from the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Yakama Indian Nation, Nez Perce Nation, Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Corps with traditional songs and drumming.



Residents and guests enjoy a traditional meal after the July 23 Blessing Ceremony.

After the blessing ceremony, Strock, who was the Northwest Division Commander when discussions began about the Celilo Village restoration project, expressed his feelings about the success of this first step in restoring the entire village. The ceremony represented a continuity of tradition and a new beginning, Strock told Celilo Village residents. “It marks the first step toward revitalizing a community that has been a part of the river’s history for centuries. It is also an important first step in an overdue process to create a quality living environment for you and your families.” Strock also welcomed Col. Gregg Martin, Northwestern Division Commander, and Col. Tom O’Donovan, Portland District Commander, to their new commands. “Today, you have the privilege of participating in a traditional ceremony of hospitality with the residents of Celilo Village. As you work to complete the renovation ...you can take pride in knowing that the work is being done for each person standing before you.”



Col. O'Donovan, left, and Lt. Gen. Strock greet Wyam Board members Delilah Heemsah, center, and Leo Aleck.



Children seemed to enjoy the event as much as their parents.

Celilo Village Project Manager George Miller considered the newly renovated longhouse to be a success. “We worked to keep the footprint of the new longhouse very similar to the old one,” Miller said. “It was important to the residents that the longhouse kept the feel, or the spirit, of the old structure, and I think it really does.” Plans are underway to renovate the entire village, including infrastructure and houses for the 26 residents. The renovations should be complete by summer of 2007.



Volunteers prepared salmon for the traditional feast, left, inside the new kitchen, and right, outside the rebuilt Longhouse.

Upcoming activities _____

- **Friday, August 26.** The next scheduled Wyam Board meeting will be held in the boardroom at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center, 5000 Discovery Drive, The Dalles, Oregon from 10 a.m. to noon. The meeting is open to the public and will provide an update on the status of the longhouse construction and cover other topics related to Celilo Village redevelopment.

The Celilo Village Redevelopment Newsletter is designed to provide information about Celilo Village Redevelopment. It is published monthly by the Celilo Village Redevelopment Project Delivery Team of the Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. For information about this project, please contact George Miller at (503) 808-4704 or by email at george.j.miller@usace.army.mil. For more information about this newsletter, please contact Jeremy Weber at (503) 808-4735 or by email at jeremy.j.weber@usace.army.mil.

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